
Regional Council Activity Report

July 25, 2001

Briefing to Member Agencies from Executive Director James M. Bourey



Executive Director's Report

The MAG Regional Governance Task Force has begun its task of exploring potential areas for expanding, retooling or redefining MAG. The task force has been meeting weekly to address the group's aggressive agenda, which is outlined in detail below. An Advisory Committee to the task force has also been formed, which will provide additional perspective and input into the process. The Advisory Committee includes state legislators, corporate and civic leaders, and members of the Governor's Transportation Vision 21 Task Force.

Here is a list of areas expected to be examined by the two groups:

Roles and Responsibilities of MAG

Examination of the current roles of MAG and additional possible responsibilities. This would include the appropriate role in land use planning and public facility planning in areas where MAG does not currently have a responsibility, including MAG having a greater role in land use planning in the unincorporated county area. It would also include a recommendation for the role of MAG in transit planning.

Geographic Extent of the Region

Examination of the current boundaries of MAG and possible extensions to the boundary. This would include a look at the functions that have implications for the region such as transportation, air quality and land use planning. It would look at the growth of the region, the interconnectedness of the various parts and the implication of federal programs for the boundary, including funding implications. In addition, it would examine the timing of any expansion.

Appropriate Membership

Study of the most appropriate types of members. This would look at local government and other possible public sector members such as the state legislature, governor's office, school boards and others. It would also include private sector groups such as chambers of commerce and economic development agencies. The examination would include how

other agencies become members. In addition, in lieu of adding membership, other concepts – such as an annual regional town hall that would include invited members – should be considered as a way to include a variety of interests that could be considered by the Regional Council.

Organizational Structure

Exploration of the best organizational structure. Alternatives to be examined would include the full range of organizational structures that exist in other locations. This would include the number of members and the representation from each of the members, including proportional representation. It would include the potential use of an executive group smaller than the entire governing body. Another consideration would be to have a structured schedule for MAG to meet with neighboring entities to ensure coordinated planning between the regions.

Voting/Decision Making Structure

Examination of the voting structure of the organization, as well as a look at the authority for making decisions. It would include recommendations on the level of authority that would be granted to an executive group or various committees within the organization. This examination also encompasses weighted voting. The changes to the voting process may be dependent upon how the membership issue is addressed by MAG. Also, if a major advisory committee is added to MAG, it should be determined how it will report. Does it report through the Management Committee or does it report directly to the Regional Council? The existing committee structure should also be reexamined.

Name of Organization

The appropriate name for the organization, given the recommended changes, will be examined. This will take into consideration the roles and responsibilities, membership and geographic extent of the region. If greater representation is provided through an advisory committee, and the geographic boundary is not changed, then perhaps no name change is needed.

The task force is expected to have a preliminary report ready for review in early September.



Regional Council Meeting Report for Wednesday, July 25, 2001

Regional Council Approves TIP and Long Range Plan

The MAG Regional Council has approved two major transportation documents that outline the projects to be built in the region over the next five to twenty years. The FY 2002-2006 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) lists all required transportation projects in the region for the next five years. The TIP comprises 990 highway projects worth more than three billion dollars, and 350 transit projects totaling more than one billion dollars.

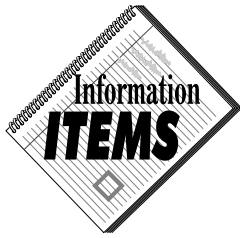
The Council also approved the MAG Long Range Transportation Plan 2001 Update, which serves as a blueprint for transportation projects for the next 20 years.

For more information contact Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Council Hears Report on Public Input

A report outlining comments received by the public during the Final Phase Public Input Opportunity was presented to the Regional Council at its July 25th meeting. MAG co-sponsored several public input opportunities in June and July 2001 in conjunction with the Arizona Department of Transportation, Regional Public Transportation Authority and Valley Connections. Opportunities included a "MAG at the Mall" event June 2-3 at Metrocenter Mall. Mall-goers could play the MAG trivia game, fill out surveys, ask questions and submit comment cards outlining their transportation priorities. On July 3, MAG held a Joint Agency Open House and Public Hearing. The event provided information on the 2002-2006 Transportation Improvement Program, the Long Range Transportation Plan Update and the FY 2001 MAG Conformity Analysis. Citizen comments were recorded by a court reporter, and both the comments and staff response to the comments were included in the FY 2001 MAG Final Phase Input Opportunity Report. The Regional Council voted to accept the report.

For more information contact Kelly Taft, MAG Communications Manager, (602) 254-6300.



Information Items

Council Backs Peters for Federal Post

The MAG Regional Council unanimously approved a recommendation to fully support the nomination of Mary Peters, Director of the Arizona Department of Transportation, to head the Federal Highway Administration. Recently, President George Bush announced his nomination of Peters for the post, which oversees the largest agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation and has a budget of more than \$32 billion. Since becoming the ADOT Director, Peters has been instrumental in strengthening the partnership between the State and regional planning processes. Her nomination is subject to confirmation by the Senate. A letter of support for Peters' confirmation, signed by MAG Chairman Skip Rimsza, has been sent on behalf of the Regional Council.

For more information contact Dennis Smith, MAG Assistant Director, (602) 254-6300.

Early Phase Provides Multiple Input Opportunities

There were triple the opportunities this year for citizens to participate in the most important phase of the MAG transportation planning process, known as "the early phase input opportunity."

Citizens, transportation users, service providers and other stakeholders are invited each year to share their thoughts and ideas on transportation projects for the region. This year, in an effort to encourage more citizens to participate, three separate meetings were held across the Valley – one each in the East Valley, West Valley, and Central Phoenix. The meetings were co-hosted by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA). Each meeting began with an open house in which informative materials were on display and staff members were available to answer questions. In addition to the three public meetings, an Agency-Based Transportation Stakeholders meeting and MAG Federal Funds Application Workshop was held July 31st at the MAG offices, to help member agencies learn more about how to submit applications for MAG federal funds.

For more information, contact Jason Stephens, MAG Public Involvement Planner, (602) 254-6300.



Upcoming Events

Task Force, Advisory Committee Hold Joint Meeting

A joint meeting is scheduled between the Regional Governance Task Force and the Governance Advisory Committee on August 23, 2001 at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the two groups to have a dialogue on the governance issues facing this region and potential strategies for addressing them. The Regional Governance Task Force is expected to have a preliminary report on their findings completed by early September. (For more on the task force, see Executive Director's Report.)

For more information contact James M. Bourey, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.

Next Regional Council Meeting

The Regional Council meeting scheduled for August 22, 2001 will not be held. That means the next Regional Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 3, 2001 at 5:00 p.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Ave., Suite 200. Agenda items are pending.

For more information contact Dennis Smith, MAG Assistant Director, (602) 254-6300.